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ABSTRACT

Theories for explaining intercultural mistrust--the mistrust of Whites by Blacks--and intracultural mistrust--the mistrust of Blacks by Blacks--are the focus of this paper. Three basic claims are made: (1) mistrust is a derivative rather than a primary construct; (2) both intercultural and intracultural mistrust are related to structural aspects of Black consciousness; and (3) intercultural and intracultural mistrust are spuriously and complexly related through the relations of each to patterns of Black consciousness. A theoretical model for understanding the variations in affiliation and control within interpersonal relations is presented that locates the trust/mistrust construct within a broad theoretical context supported by empirical research, and that relates to a network of other constructs which can guide the development of future studies. This model provides the basis for understanding variations in trust and mistrust and suggests the means through which trust and mistrust can be altered through the redistribution of affiliation and control. (KH)

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Mistrust: Types, Antecedents, Implications *

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Mistrust: Types, Antecedents, Implications

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Cultural mistrust of whites by minorites, and its interaction with various other dimensions of experience, has been described in detail by this esteemed panel. Our comments require the following definitional and conceptual distinctions.

Definitionally, trust means to have faith in, to confide in, to believe in, to entrust to, to rely or depend upon without misgiving or fear of betrayal or exploitation. Mistrusting relations are characterized by suspicion and doubt and by expectations of betrayal, manipulation, or exploitation. In this regard, it seems useful to make two further distinctions, between intercultural and intracultural mistrust, the first referring to the mistrust of whites by blacks and the second to the mistrust of blacks by blacks. These distinctions before us, the following remarks are directed toward examining the following claims: (a) mistrust is a derivative rather than primary construct; (b) both intercultural and intracultural mistrust are related to structural aspects of black consciousness; and (c) intercultural and intracultural mistrust are spuriously and complexly related through the relationship of each to patterns of black consciousness.

Mistrust as a Derivative Concept.

Based upon a review of more than 40 years research exploring the dimensionality of interpersonal relations, Taylor (in preparation) found that variations in affiliation and control are useful in gauging the quality of psychotherapeutic, parenting, intimate, and casual relationships.

Perhaps the basis for judging the quality of these relationships is made more accessible by examining the four-quadrant space implied by the intersection of affiliative and control axes. Figure 1 provides what we need.

Insert Figure 1

Democratic Quadrant I is characterized by relations that are more rewarding than costly and more inductive than coercive. Issues and differences are discussed, debated, explained, and reasoned through within a climate of warmth, intimacy, and mutuality. Colonial Quadrant II is characterized by relations that are more rewarding than costly but are more coercive than inductive. Issues and differences are resolved by directive and fiat or under threat of force within a climate that nonetheless is warm, intimate, and mutual. Totalitarian Quadrant III is characterized by relations that are more costly than rewarding and more coercive than inductive. Issues and differences are resolved by directive and fiat or under threat of force within a climate of irritability, hostility, oppositionality, and minimum relational investment. Parliamentary Quadrant IV is characterized by relations that are more costly than rewarding but are more inductive than coercive. Issues and differences are discussed, debated, explained, and reasoned through within a climate of irritability, hostility, oppositionality, and minimum relational investment. Democratic Quadrant I is seen as the conceptual opposite of Totalitarian Quadrant III, just as Colonial Quadrant II is seen as the conceptual opposite of Parliamentary Quadrant IV.

The use of political terms in the labelling of QI through QIV carries with it certain disadvantages, the chief one of which is the

implication that nominally democratic regimes function in a manner consistent with QI descriptions, that nominally colonial regimes function in the manner consistent with QII descriptions, and correspondingly for totalitarian and parliamentary regimes. Since nominally democratic regimes can function in a manner consistent with descriptions we have given for colonial, totalitarian, parliamentary or democratic relations, we disavow the above implication. The same disavowal would apply to the other nominally political regimes as well.

Two interpretive comments are in order, one general and one specific. In general, Democratic QI relations are viewed as having the most positive, and Totalitarian QIII relations that most negative influence upon psycho-emotional growth and development. These interpretations are consistent with an extensive empirical literature. Related to the subject of this Symposium, Democratic QI relations are trust generative and Totalitarian QIII relations are mistrust generative. Altogether, then, QI relations are trusting and supportive of psycho-emotional growth and QIII relations are mistrusting and negatively related to psycho-emotional growth. To us, this view of trust and mistrust offers four advantages: (a) it locates the construct of interest within a broader theoretical context supported by more than 40 years of empirical research; (b) it relates the constructs of interest to a network of other constructs which can guide the development of future studies; (c) it provides the basis for understanding variations in trust and mistrust; and (d) it suggests the means through which trust and mistrust can be altered, through the redistribution of affiliation and control.

Relationship of Mistrust to Structural Aspects of Black Consciousness.

Theories of Black Consciousness and supportive empirical evidence suggest that as one's self-acceptance of a Black identity changes, the relationship to other blacks as well as to whites varies. In the Preconscious Stage, where there is an unblinking, unthinking, unselfconscious absorption of mainstream ideology, there is a tendency to distrust blacks and to accept whites. During Preconsciousness, then, there is relatively high intracultural mistrust and relatively low intercultural mistrust.

As one moves into the Confrontation-Internalization Stage where black is right and white is wrong, there is a sharp polarization of racial attitudes, an intense identification with black culture and values and an equally forceful rejection of white culture and values. During Confrontation-Internalization, then, we anticipate that intercultural mistrust is relatively high and intracultural mistrust is relatively low, just the opposite pattern we predicted would obtain during the period of Preconsciousness.

In the third empirically documented group of Black Consciousness prototypes, integration, there is the emergence of a life plan, a blueprint for action, a readiness to form coalitions with black or white in the interest of achieving goals for blacks. In this group, there is greater tolerance of ideological, cultural, sexual, or socioeconomic differences in others and an affirmation of their right to exist equitably and without oppression. Here we presume that trust of others is based less on the color of one's skin than on one's commitment to the best interests of black people. A fourth Black Consciousness prototype is labeled Double Consciousness because both Preconscious and Integration attitudes are endorsed. Here, attitudes toward whites as well as blacks are similar to those of the Integration group. For both of these empirical prototypes, then, we expect that intercultural and intracultural mistrust are in the midrange, the degree of mistrust toward black or

white depending more upon evidence than upon predisposition. Table 1 provides a summary of our expectation regarding the relationship between Black Consciousness prototypes and both forms of mistrust, intercultural and intracultural.

Table 1

Table 1 makes explicit our expectations that (a) Intracultural mistrust is highest and intercultural mistrust is lowest for Preconsciousness Prototypes; (b) Intracultural mistrust is lowest and intercultural mistrust is highest for Confrontation-Internalization Prototypes; and (c) Intracultural and intercultural mistrust falls in the midrange for Integration and Double Consciousness Prototypes.

If trust and mistrust are derivative constructs as we have suggested, there should be a theoretically consistent relationship between structures of Consciousness and the distribution of affiliation and control toward blacks and whites. In this regard, the evidence is fragmentary. First, we do not have any data describing affiliative or control relations to whites. Therefore, we are unable to evaluate our claim for intercultural mistrust. Second, we have affiliative but no control data describing relations to blacks. But here, the data are theory consistent: Affiliative relations to blacks are lowest for Preconsciousness Prototypes, intermediate for Integration and Double Consciousness Prototypes, and highest for Confrontation-Internalization Prototypes (Brown, 1978; Denton, in preparation). These relations correspond exactly to those given in Table 1 which describes expectated relationships between Consciousness and mistrust. However, a full analysis of our claim that mistrust is a derivative construct related to structural aspects of Black Consciousness must await future studies which include

direct measures of trust and mistrust as well as measures of affiliation and control toward black and white targets.

Spurious Relationship Between Intracultural and Intercultural Mistrust.

The preceding section offered several propositions regarding variations in mean levels of mistrust across structural configurations of Black Consciousness. Altogether, we argue that there should be variations not only in terms of means but also in terms of covariances. Table 1 indicates why we have suggested that the relationship between intracultural and intercultural mistrust is complexly and spuriously organized. The pattern of relations in Table 1 implies that the correlation between intercultural and intracultural mistrust should be negative for Preconsciousness and Confrontation-Internalization prototypes and positive for Integration and Double Consciousness prototypes. The relationship, then, between intercultural and intracultural mistrust is not assumed to be directionally linear in the same way across the four Consciousness prototypes, an inference that can be evaluated readily.

To the degree trust-mistrust are derivative constructs, predicted zero-order correlations should vanish or be significantly reduced when the effects of affiliative and control relations to blacks for intracultural mistrust and to whites for intercultural mistrust are controlled.

In summary, we have suggested that trust and mistrust are derivative rather than primary constructs, that mean variations in trust and mistrust are related to structural aspects of Black Consciousness, and that the relationship between intercultural and intracultural mistrust are complexly and spuriously related to configurations of Consciousness. While thus far we have limited our comments to the relationships between Consciousness and mistrust, we feel obliged to single out the Preconscicusness Prototype for further examination. We have already suggested that they are most likely to mistrust other blacks. In our research, we have also found that they have the lowest level of self esteem, the highest level of internalized racialism,

the highest level of aggression, the lowest level of nurturance, the lowest level of internal locus of control, and the lowest level of ego identity than any of the remaining prototypes. Most distressingly, we found that they are numerically more Preconsciousness Prototypes than any of the remaining prototypes in a large sample of more than 900 black students, our intelligensia, enrolled in predominately black and white colleges, North and South. These findings provoke the following questions:

1. Should there not be greater therapeutic awareness of the intrapersonal, interpersonal, social, and cultural ravages of the Preconsciousness state? If Preconsciousness is a cultural ailment, who's to treat it?

2. Should there not be more professional and scholarly energy directed toward discovering ways of dislodging blacks from Preconsciousness toward more mature levels of Consciousness? Who's involved with this type of research and who's funding it?

3. Should there not be black cultural institutions charged with the responsbility of sheparding blacks from Preconsciousness to more mature levels of consciousness? Should the black church and black fraternal organizations be involved here?

4. Since high levels of hostility and aggression and low levels of self esteem, nurturance, effectance, and ego identity can impair personal functioning, intimate relations, parenting quality, and social or cultural relations generally, is it not the case that Preconsciousness is the "silent killer" of the black community?

We leave you with these questions which are ours as well as yours. The future of our community may well turn upon how together we answer them.

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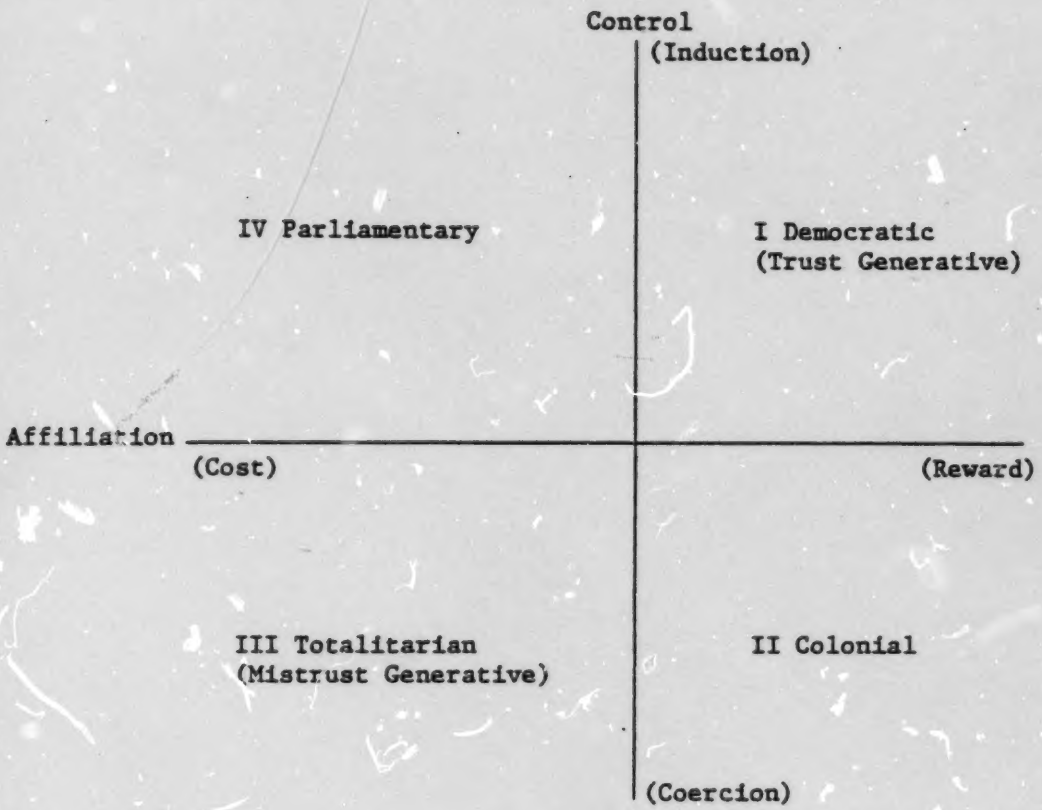

Figure 1

Theoretical Relationship Between

Basic Interpersonal Relations and Trust-Mistrust

Table 1

Theoretical Relationship Between

Black Consciousness Prototypes and Cultural Mistrust

Consciousness Prototype	Intracultural			Intercultural		
	L*	M	H	L	M	H
Preconsciousness			x	x		
Confrontation-Internalication	x					x
Integration		x			x	
Double Consciousness		x			x	

*L= Low Mistrust, M= Midrange, H= High